

Morning News

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Trump endorsee vs. Clemson legacy in SC GOP ag race

Early voting June 17-18

LUCY VALESKI
The State

How far President Donald Trump's endorsement goes in South Carolina may be put to the test next week, when Republican voters will select their nominee in a close race for the state's open agriculture commissioner seat.

Cody Simpson and Danny Lee Ford II — the top two vote-getters in the June 9 primary — will compete in the Republican runoff June 23.

Simpson, a Trump endorsee, and Ford,

the son of a successful Clemson football coach with the same name, each received more than 160,000 votes. Simpson narrowly bested Ford by less than one point, or about 4,000 votes, in the four-person primary.

Both the Trump endorsement for Simpson and recognizability of Ford's name may help decide the tight race next week, as voters weigh similar policy positions or know very little about either candidate, political scientists that spoke with The State said.



Simpson



Ford

"Given that there's not a lot of policy daylight between the candidates, name recognition and an endorsement can be everything," said Jordan Ragusa, a political science professor at the College of Charleston.

Either Simpson, Ford or Democratic nominee DeShawn Blanding will be the first new South Carolina agriculture commissioner in more than two decades. Commissioner Hugh Weathers was first elected to the office in 2004 and

announced his retirement last year.

Simpson, who grew up on a century row crop farm in Clarendon County and worked in the state and federal government, far out raised and outspent Ford. The support from Trump and money weren't enough, however, to win in the primary.

"Being President Trump's endorsed candidate from the very beginning, there were some of the candidates in the race at the time, most were, and the president said, I want you to go back home, I want you to serve South Carolina," Simpson said.

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WAR IN MIDDLE EAST

TRUMP: IRAN DEAL TO BE PUBLIC SOON



REUTERS

Vessels are seen Tuesday in the Strait of Hormuz from Musandam, Oman.

President says agreement rules out nuclear weapon for Tehran

STEVE HOLLAND AND JANA CHOUKEIR
Reuters

DUBAI — Details began to emerge Tuesday of the U.S. and Iran's interim agreement to end the war in the Middle East, with President Donald Trump saying it will rule out a nuclear weapon for Tehran and a U.S. official saying it allows Iran to sell oil upon signing.

The memorandum of understanding signed this week, though not yet public, extends a tenuous ceasefire announced in April by another 60 days to allow the warring countries to negotiate a permanent truce.

Under the deal, the U.S. will end its blockade of Iran's ports while Tehran will restore the passage of oil tankers and other maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, which it was effectively blocked since the U.S. and Israel launched strikes Feb. 28.

Trump said the agreement states clearly that Tehran will not have a nuclear weapon and the full text would be made public in a formal setting in a few days.

Iran has long said that it will not develop a nuclear weapon and that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

Trump gave shifting rationales for attacking Iran, but appears to have



ISABEL INFANTES, POOL

U.S. President Donald Trump reacts Tuesday during a working session with G7 leaders and outreach partners during the G7 summit in Evian-les-Bains, France.

achieved little of what he said he wanted: Iran's theocratic government remains in place, its ballistic missile program has not been dismantled, and it has not ended its support for anti-Israel militias like Hezbollah.

The accord exposes Trump to criticism from fellow Republicans ahead of midterm elections in November. Meanwhile, Iran's leaders could face renewed protests if they fail to ease economic pressures after a destructive war.

Israel didn't directly participate in the

negotiations and distanced itself from both the April ceasefire and the latest U.S.-Iran agreement, adding uncertainty to whether the new ceasefire will hold.

The war affected most countries in the region, killing more than 7,000 people, mostly in Iran and Lebanon, which Israel invaded in March after Iran-allied Hezbollah joined the fighting.

U.S. Vice President JD Vance claimed the agreement included Israel and Lebanon, contradicting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who said on Monday that Israel is not bound by it, and will not withdraw from southern Lebanon.

A Hezbollah spokesperson told Reuters the group believed Iran would not agree to a permanent truce if the Israeli occupation was not ended.

Iran's military command, Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, warned that Israel should expect a hard response if it did not stop its attacks on southern Lebanon.

A senior U.S. official said the agreement allows Iran to immediately begin selling oil and fuel, and included banking, transportation and insurance services to facilitate the sales.

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